

## Additional sources about children in the factories

Source A, John Simkin, Spartacus website 2005

The youngest children in the textile factories were usually employed as scavengers and piecers. Scavengers had to pick up the loose cotton from under the machinery. This was extremely dangerous as the children were expected to carry out the task while the machine was still working.

Source B John Brown, A Memoir of Robert Blincoe (1828)

A girl named Mary Richards ..who was not quite ten years of age.. It happened one evening, when her apron was caught by the shaft (of the machine). In an instant the poor girl was (smashed) on the floor. She uttered the most heart-rending shrieks! (people) heard the bones of her arms, legs, thighs, etc. successively snap ...crushed... as the machinery whirled her round, and drew tighter and tighter her body within the works, her blood was scattered over the frame and streamed upon the floor, her head appeared dashed to pieces - at last, her mangled body was jammed in so fast, between the shafts and the floor, that the water being low and the wheels off the gear, it stopped the main shaft. When she was extricated (pulled out), every bone was found broken - her head dreadfully crushed. She was carried off quite lifeless.

Source C Sarah Carpenter was interviewed in the Ashton Chronicle (23rd June, 1849)

Hughes starting beating me with a stick, and when he had done I told him I would let my mother know. He then went out and fetched the master in to me. The master started beating me with a stick over the head till it was full of lumps and bled. My head was so bad that I could not sleep for a long time, and I never been a sound sleeper since.

Source D A child worker was interviewed by The Ashton Chronicle on 19th May, 1849.

No time was allowed for breakfast and no sitting for dinner and no time for tea. We went to the mill at five o'clock and worked till about eight or nine when they brought us our breakfast, which consisted of water-porridge, with oatcake in it and onions to flavour it. Dinner consisted of Derbyshire oatcakes cut into four pieces, and ranged into two stacks. One was buttered and the other (had) treacle. By the side of the oatcake were cans of milk. We drank the milk and with the oatcake in our hand, we went back to work without sitting down.

Source E Elizabeth Bentley, interviewed by Michael Sadler's Parliamentary Committee on 4th June, 1832.

I worked from five in the morning till nine at night. I lived two miles from the mill. We had no clock. If I had been too late at the mill, I would have been quartered. I mean that if I had been a quarter of an hour too late, a half an hour would have been taken off. I only got a penny an hour, and they would have taken a halfpenny.